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Garrity fails to suggest distribution of access control information in a manner that facilitates changing television channels by a viewer

Claims 1-4, 8, 10-17, 21, 23-27, 31, 33-37, 41, 43-47, 51, and 53-55 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) over Garrity. In support of the rejection, the Office makes a general reference to large portions of Garrity without actually connecting any particular teachings with the claimed elements. For example, at page 6 of the Office Action with regard to the distributing step of claim 1 the Office cites “abstract, figure 2, col. 3 lines 33–col. 6 lines 49.” Those sections not only fail to suggest the claimed element, they are not even relevant because they are focused on delivery of television content **from a content provider to a network**. As described in the Abstract, the data processing system, i.e., network, receives **requests to accept delivery of content from the content provider** (Abstract). Figure 2 doesn’t even show a subscriber device, and the illustrated authentication concerns **authentication of the content provider**. As described at col. 4, lines 46-49, a content provider desiring to deliver a file is authenticated with the file input gateway verifying CP (content provider) authentication through querying the SMS and scheduling database.

In contrast with Garrity, the presently claimed invention concerns delivery of television **from the network to consumers**. The difficulties associated with delivery of television **from the network to consumers** differs from delivery of television **from the content provider to the network**. For example, content providers don’t “channel surf” or otherwise demand the capability to rapidly change channels. Further, content providers are not generally inclined toward modifying equipment to receive channels for which they have not paid, unlike some consumers. The presently claimed invention facilitates security while also facilitating the capability to rapidly change channels by distributing access information to network devices that

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are logically nearer to the consumer devices such that authentication is executed relatively quickly, thereby allowing quicker channel changes. Claim 1 has been amended to further emphasize these distinguishing aspects of the invention. Hence, claim 1 distinguishes Garrity by reciting "distributing access control information from a distribution device to an access device for use by the access device in authenticating a subsequent request by a host device to join a television channel multicast group ... and admitting, by the access device, the host device to the television channel multicast group if and only if the host device is determined to be authorized to join the television channel multicast group, whereby the access device receives the access control information before it is needed for determining whether the host device is authorized to join the multicast group, thereby facilitating changing channels."

Garrity does discuss consumer security in passing at col. 7, lines 9-22. However, Garrity still fails to suggest moving access control information closer to consumers to facilitate rapid authentication and rapid channel changing. Indeed, in Figure 4 Garrity shows an architecture where User Server 404 must access Customer Account Profiles 424 located somewhere outside server 400 (Garrity does not state where) for access control information, so it is by definition a multistep process in which the Policy Enforcement Point (PEP) does not have, prior to the request, the information required to also function as the Policy Decision Point (PDP). In particular, User Server 404 does not have, prior to receiving a request, information to authenticate consumers. As described in the specification of this application at page 8, lines 9-25, and as recited in claim 1, the PEP and PDP are converged by pre-distributing the access control information to the access device. Hence, claim 1 still distinguishes Garrity for the reasons already stated above. Consequently, Applicant again requests that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

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Claims 2-4, 8, 10-17, 21, 23-27, 31, 33-37, 41, 43-47, 51, and 53-55 which were also rejected under 35 USC §103(a) over Garrity are allowable for the same reasons stated above with regard to claim 1. Consequently, Applicant also requests that the rejections of those claims be withdrawn.

The combination of Garrity and Dobbins fails to suggest distribution of access control information in a manner that facilitates changing television channels by a viewer

Claims 5-7, 9, 18-20, 22, 28-30, 32, 38-40, 42, 48-50 and 52 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over Garrity in view of Dobbins. Each of those claims is dependent, either directly or indirectly, on one of the independent claims which distinguishes the cited combination for the same reasons stated above with regard to claim 1. Consequently, Applicant requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

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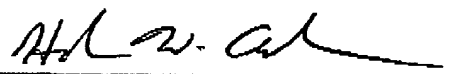
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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Holmes W. Anderson, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 (X305) so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

  
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